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COLOR, LINE AND MATERIAL, AS RELATED TO INTERIOR DECORATION.

BY CARRICA LE FAVRE.



WHEN we become sufficiently refined and our sight sufficiently sensitive, we shall, no doubt, find that everything or quality has its own favorite color. Also, the more one studies the subject of color, the more sensitive, highly organized and exacting becomes the psychic, as well as the physical vision. The unrefined recognize few beyond the primary colors.

In uncultured communities we find a general use of one of the primary colors, flat, or large and staring stripes or plaids of two, or of the three primaries. Of the primary colors, red is physical, and its tendency is to heat and excite the blood. Blue is mental, and its tendency is to cool and quiet. Yellow is the spiritual color, and its tendency is to animate the nerves and act on the sympathetic system.

Again, red is eccentric, and in art represents the outgoing

This is destructive to art and injurious to health, and it savors too much of the uncultured. The blends call our attention, if at all, by attraction, fascination, by a caress, if you please. The tendency of this is to restore that degree of calm and harmony which is conducive to health and to spiritual and intellectual growth.

In the lower stages of human development we find the three colors represented or present in large bodies. For example, one object will be of one of the primaries, another of another of the primaries, and so on. Later on the colors are brought into closer proximity by the introduction of an additional color into a portion of the object. Still later on we find manifested a discontent with the large bodies of color. They are now cut up into small bits and mingled together into a mosaic patchwork. Still further on, as intelligence advances, and art asserts itself, this patchwork of solids no longer satisfies. We now find the clearly defined lines which have hitherto separated and made enemies of the three colors, withdrawn, and the colors allowed to flow into each other. Thus by blending are new and higher colors created and established. Still the human faculties unfold, take shape and grow exacting, and demand finer and higher expressions. Now, not satisfied with flat colors, even in their refined state, we seek to embody daintiness of color with complexity in arrangement. This complexity is not limited to the color, but is found in the material, line and surface of the object as well. So it goes on, and to-day we have indeed a wide gamut of expressions in color, as related to art, interior decoration and dress fabrics. Colors



CEILING DECORATION, HOTEL REGENT, BROOKLYN. DESIGNED AND DRAWN BY FREDERICK MARSHALL.
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element. Blue is concentric, and it represents the infolding or retiring element. Yellow mediates between the two, and its state is normal.

It is not until the colors have been carried on up through the nine-fold accord that they are sufficiently refined and artistic to be employed for people of our attainments. The primaries call our attention by a shock—by startling us.

are now no longer enemies, to stand aloof as if to war at and overthrow each other. Artistic ingenuity has pulled down the barriers and colors like the races of the earth, mix and blend each feeling that it has been favored with a touch of that in nature which makes all kin.

Watching the stages of development along these lines, we find that as the psychic and the physical organism assume

complexity—or, perhaps, I might better say as they become less earthy and more sensitive and refined, then higher colors and finer blends are sought for. Even to-day, to the sensitive and highly organized, there is clearly discernible a glint, a glimmer, a sheen in the yellows, the purples and the blues, which partake of the supernatural and divine. Demand for good colors, as for all other things, will bring them. Also, if we demand tailors, milliners, dressmakers and decorators who are well versed in color, we shall have them. In architecture, carpets, wall-paper, tapestries and interior decoration we already have artists—yes, and to an extent in the manufacture of cloths. The professional one who clothes the walls and floors is studying the subjects of color, line and fabric, and is fast learning his business. The progress in these departments the past dozen or twenty years has been marvelous.

What about the average housewife or homemaker as a decorator? The bewildering array of unrelated objects and colors in the home bears sorrowful testimony that if the average woman has begun the study of color, line and relationship, she has not gotten beyond the a. b. c. of this practical art.

Curtains, while they should be uniform as seen from the street, they need not be white, and certainly not starched. Starched white curtains have spoiled many a pretty room. Curtains should be thin, could be of lace, but not white, unless the room is white.

Repetition is always good. If the color of the furnishings or of the walls, or at least of the woodwork, is repeated in the curtains, the effect is good. These suggestions apply as well in the sleeping rooms. I can see no reason for the use of bleached white bedding and coverlets. The natural unbleached cotton, linen, or silk is good for the inner dressing of the bed, but bleaching spoils everything that is subjected to the process. Bleaching, like starch, destroys the artistic value of everything thus treated.

The outside of the bed should be of the color scheme of the room furnishings. Striking contrasts are always to be avoided.

A vase, or jar, or any object not in harmony with its environment is an unrelated object, and as such it is inartistic. In selecting colors for a room, beware of red in or near the ceiling. As I said before, red travels faster than other colors, and its tendency is to bring anything of that color nearer than it really is. Red in or near the ceiling would give us a sensation of pressure there. Blue, on the contrary, is cooling and retiring, and as it lends distance, it can be used with better results.

If you have ample means, I recommend rich Oriental colors in heavy materials if the rooms are large and heavily wooded. But the color and line must always be artistic. Nothing is so pitiable as a room furnished with money alone, and no art.

Interior wood finishing, polished plain, carved in outline, high relief, intaglio, or fretwork, is artistic, and lends great beauty wherever employed. Hammered brass, copper, or dull silver are excellent wherever used. There is also a process for treating metal to a rapturously beautiful color, ranging from the duldest brown through all the tones of olive and dull old yellow, that gives it great value as a decorative process. Metal thus treated might be employed in making trays, panels, railings, picture frames, jewel caskets, vases, jars, jugs and the many things that are now made of less desirable materials.

If the means are limited, I recommend light mellow tints in light weight. Still one may use dark colors even in the cheaper furnishings. A room may have its walls covered with blue denim, as also its floors. A few Japanese rugs on the floor over blue denim. The curtains of delicate blue and cream Japanese cotton draping crepe, and simple furniture in harmony and a few blue cushions, gives a pretty blue room.

DECORATING WALL HANGINGS.

BY ERBON.



To decorate Lincrusta in an effectual manner it requires quite a different preliminary treatment to all the other relief decorations, Corticine excepted. This, it will be seen, is owing to the oil in its composition. This being so, sizing the material is of very little use; as it will "creep" off, owing to its greasy nature. The best and safest way is to give it a coat of thin lacquer, and then paint with some sharp color, especially if the material is to be metalized or bronzed. I have found this to be the best of all methods

to ensure good and lasting work. Lincrusta lends itself very successfully to all the treatments in old golds, silvers, etc. The plaques with a little trouble can be so skillfully done that it would take a good judge to tell the difference between the real metal and the imitation, unless tried with a knife or some other sharp instrument.

The greatest difficulty to contend against is the ground of the fillings, dados and ceilings, etc., etc., and what to do with them. Stenciling is not of much use. Other methods have been tried, as yet, I believe, without much success to the decorator. What methods the manufacturers have for producing certain effects is not within my pro-

vince to discuss here. I am simply endeavoring to explain, from a decorator's point of view, how and what to do to enable him to turn out a fair and reasonable job, creditable to himself and satisfactory to his clients. If he, the decorator, can accomplish this, it must be the most satisfactory to all concerned.

We will now assume we are about to decorate a Lincrusta wall in metal, stains, and scumbled. If we want a good job we must proceed as follows: First give the material a good coat of lacquer; this will dry hard in half an hour, and kills anything of a greasy nature. When dry, go over the lacquer with a thin coat of sharp color; this will effectually stop the gold size sinking in, and give a better lustre to the metal. When the color is perfectly dry, size with Japanners gold size; add some varnish to the gold size, which prevents it going off too soon, the "tack" being much stronger than when Japanners is used by itself.

When the size has a nice "tack," which experience alone will enable the decorator to judge, commence and lay the metal, after which clean well off, and after allowing the material to harden, lacquer to required tone.

In lacquering, care must be taken not to go over the part done a second time, as it dries very quickly, and wherever it is touched a second time it will be considerably darker. I have



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